

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

TOP SECRET

September 8, 1961

MEMORANDUM TO

The Secretary of State
The Secretary of Defense

The following questions seem to me to emerge from our discussion yesterday, and I am sending this memorandum to both of you in the knowledge that many of the questions have both a political and a military component. You may prefer to make separate answers, or you may find it possible to produce a single agreed response. On question 9, I am asking separately for the view of the Secretary of the Treasury, who was out of town during our meeting yesterday.

1. What will the presence in Europe of 6 additional U. S. divisions accomplish

a. In meeting the Berlin situation?

b. In vitalizing NATO and strengthening the long-term defense of Western Europe?

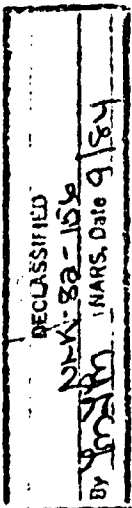
2. Will an increase of our conventional forces in Europe convince Khrushchev of our readiness to fight to a finish for West Berlin or will it have the opposite effect? What other steps of all kinds may help to carry conviction on this point?

3. Supposing that we and our allies raise the ground strength of NATO to 30 effective divisions, what have we accomplished? Specifically:

a. Can NATO then defend Western Europe against a massive conventional attack by the Soviet Bloc?

b. Can we safely mount a corps-size probe to reopen access to Berlin and at the same time present an adequate ground shield?

c. How long can 30 divisions be supported logistically in combat?



TOP SECRET

NATIONAL SECURITY ACTION MEMORANDUM NO. 92

Distr: orig SecState
cc SecDef
cc Gen Taylor
cc Secy Treas
B. Smith/C. Johnson
NSC Files

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

TOP SECRET

-2-

September 8, 1961

4. It has been my understanding that we would need to call additional divisions only as we actually decided to send existing divisions to Europe. Since our current plan is to send only one such division, why is it necessary now to call 4 divisions from the Reserve?

5. If we call up 4 additional National Guard divisions now and do not send them to Europe, how can they be usefully employed? How long would it take to convert them to Army of the U. S. divisions? How long would it take to create effective A. U. S. divisions by other means?

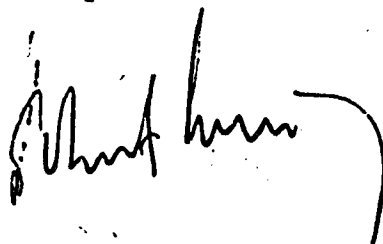
6. How much of the 4 division build-up would be justified in view of the overall world situation if Berlin were not an immediate issue?

7. What tactical air support is needed for the planned forces in Europe and what is the plan for providing such support?

8. The reduction in terms of days of combat of the supply backup of U. S. forces in Europe which will result from increasing our forces and from supplying the West Germans has been noted. Would this result in putting U. S. troops in a possible combat situation without adequate supplies?

9. If we add 6 divisions to NATO, may not Khrushchev add 6 or more divisions to the conventional forces facing NATO? Or will logistical problems, fear of attack by atomic weapons and preoccupations in the satellites set a limit on the Soviet conventional forces available for immediate use against NATO?

10. What is the estimated net gold cost per year of the movement of six divisions to Europe and what can be done to reduce it?



NATIONAL SECURITY ACTION MEMORANDUM NO. 92

TOP SECRET

